

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL MEETING
SUMMARY MINUTES
JANUARY 9, 2003 – LA QUINTA INN & SUITES LAKE MARY

MEMBERS PRESENT:

M.M. “Red” McCullough –
Bill Beuret – Maison et Jardin Restaurant
Pat Freeman – Altamonte Springs City Commission
Helen Stairs – Helen Stairs Theatre
Frank Fry – Holiday Inn Altamonte
Jay Sheppard – Best Western Marina Hotel
Dick Van Der Weide - Board of County Commissioners
Linda Marshall – SpringHill Suites Altamonte

STAFF PRESENT:

Sally Sherman – Deputy County Manager
Crockett Hunter – Seminole County Budget Office
Betty Newton – Seminole County Budget Office
Kathryn Townsend – Seminole County CVB
Karen Brown – Seminole County CVB
Sharron Barnett – Seminole County CVB
Laura Richeson – Bennett & Company
Laura Bennett – Bennett & Company
Ann E. Colby – County Attorney’s Office

GUESTS:

Jason Weeks – Altamonte Sports
Dana Hirshburg – Homewood Suites Lake Mary
Maggie Shoemaker – Homewood Suites Lake Mary
Brent Nelson – Central Florida Sports Commission
Bruce Skwarlo – Orlando Marriott Lake Mary
Jamie Ross – Hilton Garden Inn Lake Mary
Penny Leffel – Courtyard By Marriott/SpringHill Suites Sanford
Bob Dallari – Council of Local Governments in Seminole County
Bill McDermott – Seminole County Economic Development
Rebecca Rhodes – Embassy Suites Orlando North
Scott Kennedy – La Quinta Inn & Suites Lake Mary
Gail Remmers – MainStay Suites Lake Mary
Scott Clack – World Sports & Marketing
Terry Dorner – World Sports & Marketing
Beth Fosgate – World Sports & Marketing

CALL TO ORDER

Meeting called to order by the Chair at 12:30 p.m. followed by introductions. The Chair noted Bob Dallari will be Cindy Gennell’s replacement following his confirmation by the Board of County Commissioners.

APPROVAL OF DECEMBER 12, 2002 MINUTES

Motion, second (Helen Stairs/Pat Freeman) and carried to approve the minutes of the December 12, 2002 meeting.

EVENT SPONSORSHIP APPLICATION

U.S. Pro Wakeboard Competition – World Sports & Marketing. Scott Clack presented a brief overview of the event on behalf of a request for \$20,000. This event returns to Seminole County now that water levels of Crane’s Roost Lake are stable. Three hours of exposure will result from original and repeat airings of the televised event. The application conservatively estimates 200 hotel rooms and 600 room nights. Questions and

discussion followed. Staff recommendation of \$10,000 for this first-time event is based on the organization's reputation and past success. Jason Weeks expressed additional supporting comments. Motion, second (Linda Marshall/Helen Stairs) and carried to approve the grant at \$10,000 as recommended by staff.

STAFF REPORTS

Financial – Kathryn Townsend reported November revenue was 2% below projection and 2% below November of last fiscal year. Keeping in mind flat revenue projections for fiscal year 2002-2003, this puts us approximately 21% below pre-Sept. 11. The budget report remains unremarkable. She recalled questions at last month's meeting about expenditures in October for trade show registrations. Members received a report itemizing registrations approved and prepaid from this fiscal year's budget. A member suggested forming a committee to assess the necessity and value of these registrations and discussion followed. Staff is available and most willing to meet with the committee and assist with the travel review. Sally Sherman cautioned members about eliminating any responsibility or trip without full understanding in detail of what is being eliminated or considered and noted the County Manager has final authority. It was generally agreed to form a subcommittee. A member suggested including hotel sales personnel as well as management. Linda Marshall made a motion to form a committee to evaluate current and future tour and travel expenditures. Discussion followed with no second to the motion. It was then decided to hold the matter for New Business. The Board was asked to provide staff with a list of individuals to serve on the committee. Kathryn Townsend circulated a sign-up sheet for tickets to the upcoming Scottish Highland Games.

Sales – Karen Brown reported the Seminole County Official Visitor Guide has 18 advertisers with 8 new advertisers and 3 discontinued advertisers. Delivery is expected by mid-February. Several events have been scheduled during the month of May in conjunction with Riverfest 2003. We will host a delegation of visitors from Ireland from January 24-30. Members of the industry were encouraged to take advantage of cooperative advertising and direct mail opportunities. Karen will attend Florida Huddle in Miami January 22-24. She has scheduled appointments with international tour operators who bring tours to Florida. Leads will be posted immediately after the show.

Information Inquiries – Fran Sullivan was not present. Members received a copy of the advertising response report for individual review. It was generally agreed to dispense with a verbal recap unless there were questions.

Central Florida Sports Commission – Brent Nelson informed members that Kevin Coulthart has accepted another position. The Sports Commission expects to have his replacement on board shortly. Mr. Nelson reviewed upcoming and future events. More information on the 2003 ISA Men's B World Championship is forthcoming. Kevin was also working on several other events. The Sports Commission hopes to present an evaluation sheet to members at the next meeting as a tool in evaluating potential opportunities. The Chair noted the TDC presently has an evaluation sheet as part of the application process. Mr. Nelson explained this would be an enhancement in terms of marketing value. The Chair agreed this would be very helpful.

PR & Marketing – Laura Richeson reviewed the December 2002 PR and Marketing report with updates on the latest edition of "Seminole Shorts", Central Florida Regional Nature Heritage website, Lake Mary Rinehart Road Trails Beautification Project and advertising/creative development. Members also received a comprehensive Clip Report for the last half of fiscal year 2001-2002. Media coverage for the entire year resulted in total advertising value of nearly \$600,000.00. The December 2002 issue of Southern Living was circulated. Seminole County received a free listing in the Travel Directory section as a value added opportunity with an advertising placement value of approximately \$1500. Bennett and Company will attend the Visit Florida Media Mission in New York on behalf of Seminole County on January 25. This is a cost-effective opportunity to bring Florida to travel journalists. A full report will follow at the February meeting. Laura Bennett expressed appreciation to the TDC for selecting Bennett and Company as its agency. Members received copies of the company's information portfolio. The agency has put considerable emphasis on its media outreach effort.

Executive Report – Sally Sherman reported Jack Wert's position has been posted with a closing date of February 12, 2003. A selection process has been established that includes a provision for a TDC member to participate in the final round of interviews. She suggested that the TDC appoint a representative under New Business. We anticipate Kevin Coulthart's replacement in the near future. We are very excited about the upcoming visit of a large delegation from Ireland who make up the Executive Committee of the Local Authority Member's Association. In response to an inquiry Ms. Sherman affirmed the group is paying for their own travel expenses. Seminole County will host one dinner and they will reciprocate. Invitations are forthcoming. December hotel

occupancy dropped approximately 6%. The occupancy report will be used as a tool as we consider the new budget and opportunities related to tourism dollars.

OLD BUSINESS – In response to an inquiry Karen Brown updated current airline service at Orlando Sanford International. A member requested an update on the conference center. Commissioner Van Der Weide noted at this point the project depends on plans to secure funding for a parking garage. Sally Sherman added the interlocal agreement was signed and the initial funding proposal is scheduled to be presented to County Commissioners in March. The Commissioner stated the project will not go forward unless the City of Sanford secures funding to build that garage. Red McCullough observed December occupancy was the worst ever. He noted two new hotels are being built in Lake Mary and rates are down at some hotels. In response to the original question regarding status of the conference center Ann Colby stated from a practical standpoint the County is actively moving forward.

NEW BUSINESS

Election of Chair and Vice Chair – Frank Fry was elected Chair on nomination and second by Red McCullough and Pat Freeman respectively. Red McCullough was elected Vice Chair on nomination and second by Linda Marshall and Pat Freeman respectively. In response to an inquiry Red McCullough recalled last month's discussion about electing the new Chair out of sequence.

Travel Review Subcommittee – Motion, second (Linda Marshall/Pat Freeman) and carried to appoint a committee to review current and next budget year registrations. Eve Hunt (Holiday Inn), Penny Leffel (Courtyard by Marriott/SpringHill Suites Sanford) and Bruce Skwarlo (Orlando Marriott Lake Mary) will serve on the committee.

Director Position Interview Representative - In response to an inquiry Sally Sherman briefly explained the applicant screening process and stated the County Manager will make the final hiring decision. Bill Beuret was appointed to work with County Staff during the final interview process as discussed earlier. Mr. Beuret accepted the appointment and thanked everyone for their support during his year as Chair.

GENERAL DISCUSSION/ANNOUNCEMENTS – In response to an inquiry it was noted that a problem with the individual conducting surveys for our research project has been resolved.

HOSPITALITY UPDATE – None.

NEXT MEETING DATE AND LOCATION – February 13, 2003 at Homewood Suites, Lake Mary.

ADJOURNMENT - There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the Chair at 2:20 p.m.